

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8632

INFO AMEMBASSY CARACAS

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AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 7941

CARACAS/BOGOTA PASS HERMAN POLLACK; DEPT PASS ALL ARA
DIPLOMATIC POSTS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, AR

SUBJ: WORKING GROUP ON SCIENCE AND TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGY

REF: STATE 233736

1. SUMMARY: GOA REPRESENTATIVES EXPRESSED CONSIDERABLE INTEREST
IN IDEA OF USG COORDINATING OFFICE. DEVELOPMENT OF INTER-
AMERICAN MECHANISM WAS DISCUSSED AND ARGENTINA IS SKEPTICAL.
MEETING OF FULL WORKING GROUP ON MID-DECEMBER RATHER THAN
JANUARY WAS SUGGESTED. DISCUSSION ALSO FOCUSED ON RELATED
POINTS OF OAS RESTRUCTURING AND "CODE OF CONDUCT" FOR
TRANSNATIONAL CORPORATIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. AMB BOWDLER MET WITH FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIALS HEADED
BY UNDERSECRETARY DESMARAS TOGETHER WITH CONSULTANTS RODRIGUEZ
AND GALIGNIANA TO DISCUSS KEY ISSUES RELATED TO
WORKING GROUP PROGRESS.

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3. DISCUSSION CENTERED ON INTER-AMERICAN MECHANISM AND

USG COORDINATING OFFICE. ARGENTINES EXPRESSED LITTLE ENTHUSIASM FOR INTER-AMERICAN MECHANISM ALTHOUGH THEY CONCEDED THAT OUR IDEAS AS SPELLED OUT IN TALKING POINTS PAPER MADE SENSE AND PROMISED TO STUDY THEM. ALL WERE SKEPTICAL ABOUT USE OF OAS AS FRAMEWORK FOR NEW MECHANISM, ARGUING THAT OAS WAS MORIBUND. DESMARAS WAS PARTICULARLY OUTSPOKEN IN HIS CRITICISM. THEY WERE WILLING TO CONCEDE THAT IN A COMPLETELY RESTRUCTURED OAS PLACING COORDINATING COMMITTEE MECHANISM MIGHT WORK, BUT THEY WERE DOUBTFUL THAT THAT DEGREE OF RESTRUCTURING WOULD BE ACHIEVABLE. DESMARAS SUGGESTED THE COMPLETELY UNWORKABLE CONCEPT OF A ROTATING SECRETARIAT. BOWDLER OBSERVED THAT WHILE SITES OF MEETING OF COORDINATING COMMITTEE AND SUBORDINATE GROUPS MIGHT ROTATE, SECRETARIAT SHOULD BE LOATED IN ONE PLACE. AT ONE POINT GALIGNIANA REPORTED THAT SUB-GROUP III WAS OPPOSED TO NEW INTER-AMERICAN MECHANIS, BUT DESMARAS NOTED THATTHIS WAS NOT NECESSARILY THE DEFINITIVE DECISION OF THE WORKING GROUP.

4. WITH RESPECT TO DATES FOR SUB-GROUP IV MEETING AND WORKING GROUPS, ARGENTINE LIKE IDEA OF NOVEMBER25 TO 30 SCHEDULING OF SUB-GROUP, BUT STRONLGY ADVISED AGAINST POSTPONING MEETING OF WORKINGGROUP UNTIL JANUARY. THEY NOTED THAT JANUARY AND FEBRUARY WERE BAD MONTHS HERE AND IN NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES DUE TO SUMMER VACATION PERIOD. THEY SUGGESTED THAT MEETING MIGHT BE HELD ABOUT DECEMBER 15.

5. ARGENTINES PRESSED HARD ON WHICH COMMITMENT THE USG WAS PREPARED TO ASSUME REGARDING THE NEW S/T EFFORT. BOWDLER EXPLAINED IN VERY GENERAL WAY OUT APPROACH ON FUNDING AS OUT-LINED IN TALKING POINTS PAPER, EMPHASIZING DIFFICULTIES USG WOULD ANTICIPATE IN FUNDING A NEW ORGANIZATION. THE ARGENTINES SAID THEY HAD SAME DIFFICULTIES. TO SEVERAL QUERIES DIRECTED TO DEFINING US FUNDING AND PRESSING FOR CONTINUING SUPPORT OF BASIC SCIENCE BY PROF. RODRIGUEZ, BOWDLER EXPRSED IDEA THAT MODALITIES STILL QUITE OPEN, INCLUDING POSSIBILITY OF INCREASED FUNDING TO OAS SPECIAL FUND IS IT IS BASED ON SOUND PROGRAMMING AND LATIN AMERICANS WILL ASSUME THEIR SHARE.

6. BOWDLER WENT ON TO EXPALIN OUR PRELIMINARY THINKING ON
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A USG COORDINATING OFFICE - AS DESCRIBED IN TALKING POINTS PAPER. ARGENTINES EXPRESSED GREAT INTERESTIN THIS POSSIBILITY, PARTICULARLY AS AN AVENUE FOR OBTAINING INFORMATION, AIRING COMPLAINTS AND ENLISTING USG COOPERATION IN TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER. BOWDLER INDICATED THAT USG IS PREPARED TO REVIEW GOVERNMENT-OWNED TECHNOLOGY TO SEE WHETHER THERE ARE PATENTS OF INTEREST TO LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES OF WHICH THEY MAY NOT BE AWARE, BUT HE CAUTIONED AGAINST HIGH EXPECTATIONS TO WHICH

GALIGNIANA AGREED. HE ALSO CAUTIONED AGAINST CONCLUSION THAT
USG PREPARED TO DICTATE TO PRIVATE COMPANIES ON TECHNOLOGY
TRANSFER. IN THIS AREA, BOWDLER CONTINUED, INTERESTED LATIN
AMERICAN COUNTRIES WILL HAVE TO CREATE CONDITIONS WHICH WILL
ATTRACT PRIVATE INVESTMENT, WITH USG ROLE BEING ONE OF FACILITA-
TING CONTACT AND PERHAPS ENCOURAGING AGREEMENT BETWEEN
PARTIES.

7. THIS LED TO DISCUSSION OF GUIDELINES. SURPRISINGLY, ARGENTINES
SEEMED TO FAVOR DRAWING UP GUIDELINES IN HEMISPHEREIC CONTEXT
AND GAVE LIP SERVICE TO NEED FOR MAKING THESE BALANCED SO THAT
PRIVATE INVESTMENT WOULD BE ATTRACTED BY TERMS THEY COULD ACCEPT
AND "RULES OF THE GAME" THAT WOULD ASSURE CONTINUED FAIR TREATMENT.
THEY RECOGNIZED THAT, IN THIS AREA THE MANDATE OF THE TWO WORKING
GROUPS ESTABLISHED AT THE WASHINGTON MFM OVERLAP. THEY WERE IN-
CLINED TO ALLOW THAT WG ON MNC'S TO HANDLE THIS TASK WITH
APPROPRIATE CONSULTATION WITH THE WG ON S/T. GALIGNIANA, WHO
PARTICIPATED IN SUB-GROUP III MEETINGS, TOOK LEAD IN PRESENTING
VIEWS ON THIS ASPECT.

8. COMMENT: ONE GETS THE IMPRESSION THAT GOA HAS REALLY NOT
THOUGH THROUGH A COORDINATED POSITION ON S/T WORKING GROUP.
THE ARGENTINES FREQUENTLY EXPRESSED PERSONAL VIEWS. FOR EXAMPLE
GALIGNIANA REPEATEDLY TOOK A HARD LINE ON TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER,
SUPPORTING LAWS LIKE ARGENTINA'S ON CONTROL OF TECHNOLOGY IM-
PORTATION AND URGING US TO DEFINE ITS FUNDING LEVEL. RODRIGUEZ
WAS PUSHING TO CONTINUE SUPPORT FOR BASIC SCIENCE AND OAS
MULTINATIONAL PROGRAM. HOWEVER THEY WERE QUITE RECEPTIVE TO OUR
IDEAS AND OPEN IN EXPRESSING VIEWS THEY ARE OBVIOUSLY
QUITE INTERESTED IN USG COORDINATING OFFICE MECHANISM BUT SKEPTICAL
ABOUT INTER-AMERICAN MECHANISM, BUT WILLING TO EXPLORE IT
FURTHER.

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NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED ARA POSTS.

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